REINVENTING FLEXIBILITY:
A HYBRID PARADIGM FOR THAI MARKETS IN
BANGKOK, THAILAND

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This thesis asserts that the current form of the proliferating modernization of Thai markets in terms of economic growth and the incorporation of building technology to improve goods storage, attractive envelope, and shopping environment, is actually neither modern nor sustainable for the Thai socio-economic system.

Despite fact that Thai Markets have claimed to be modernized over time, they are merely heavily populated for a few hours each day, and otherwise remain barren. Recent reports of the declining state of the Markets also exhibit the failures of the current model of Thai markets, which avow to be modern yet are not sustainable nor competent, creating bigger crisis in Thai urban culture. My thesis argues that the temporal condition of underutilized space and the declining state of Thai markets are in fact architectural problems that need to be resolved spatially and programmatically. This thesis proposes that a new breed of architecture for Thai markets is conceivable and necessary in order for Thai markets to survive while nurturing the rich urban goods distribution, consumption, and dynamic urban spectacles.

This thesis will investigate the possibilities of a new paradigm for Thai markets in Bangkok by hybridization between the Thai markets and street markets to create a model that is rather an ephemeral form of architecture, a new multi-functional space for market vending and urban activities, resulting from the braids of streets networks.

This place will become a new civic building type --- which is a cross-breed between street and architecture, landscape and buildings --- to assemble the public around their common needs for commodities, leisure, and interaction.
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REINVENTING FLEXIBILITY:
A HYBRID PARADIGM FOR THAI MARKETS IN
BANGKOK, THAILAND
The Old Capital City

Floating Markets, Street Markets, and Traditional Fresh Markets had already existed since Ayuthaya and Sukhothai period.

Infrastructural upgrading

Bangkok Mass Transit Authority was founded

Bangkok Rail Way was founded

Bangkok City Center moved to the east side of the old capital city.

Vitory Monument was built.

The first shopping mall in Bangkok, Siam Center was built.

In the era of King Rama IV (1851 – 1868) known in foreign countries as King Mongkut, the whole country, with a concentration in Bangkok, went through a modernization which was influenced by the western culture. The modernization carried innumerable projects of paved ways construction, which greatly resulted in the capital city (Bangkok) expansion. At that time, the extensive roads projects are Thanon Trong, Thanon Bamrung Meung, and Thanon Furng Nakorn.

Many of the workers who lost their jobs as a result of the crisis and others who could not find jobs, took to street vending as a source of livelihood.

The survey showed that there were about 2,400 street vendors at that time.

Due to the economical depression after WWI farmers in suburban areas gave up their lands to find a job in the city.

Total population in Bangkok increased from 750,000 in 1950 to 1.2 million due to 37,800 rural migrants that entered Bangkok annually.

The Bangkok Expressways was founded

The government attempted to encourage self-employment in the Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan.

The first supermarket in Bangkok, Foodland was built

Following the success of Foodland, Villar Market were built, targeting prime business areas.

The first hypermarket, Big C was built

The survey showed that there were 19,000 street vendors operating in the city.

Street vendors was seen as a threat to Bangkok orderlyness.
The city has limited the increase of the street vendors.

Bangkok Traffic Office Bureau to designate areas for street vending

Tops Supermarkets were opened, target mainly the middle class consumers and seek partnership with shopping malls in the city and business area.

The survey showed that there were around 380,000 street vendors operating in the city.

Five global retailers (British Tesco, French Carrefour and Casino, Dutch Ahold and Makro, and Belgian Food Lion) invested 120 million USD in Thailand to launch their hyper markets.

BTS Sky train opened

There were 39 department stores, 213 shopping malls, 143 supermarkets, and 82 hypermarkets more in the city.

The survey showed that the Thai markets has lost 50% of its customers to modern trade markets.

40% of the Thai markets have been closed down since 1970.

The survey showed that 40% of the Thai markets have been closed down since 1970.

40% of the Thai markets have been closed down since 1970.

Many Thai markets in Bangkok are threaten to move or close down.

Market typologies in Thailand and the history of modernization and economical development from 1782 to now
The presence of the Thai markets is integral to the survival of their surrounding communities and their growing populations. Thai markets offer a large variety of fresh local produce at prices more affordable than at supermarkets. For the majority of Thai citizens whose annual income is less than 4,000 dollars a year, the markets still have advantages over modern shopping outlets in many ways.

The sights and sounds, the hustle and bustle, the thrill of bargaining, objects which are hard to find, the smell of the fresh produce all contribute to the drama of Thai markets. Furthermore, Thai markets had been used as the places for periodic spectacles such as fairs, festivals, over night movie shows, and carnivals, where people can find an opportunity and a place for collective expression.

Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, has gone through rapid industrial urbanization since World War II which has included advances in its infrastructure such as modern transportation technology. Following a century of growth, Bangkok now has the world’s third largest single-building airport terminal, over 200 skyscrapers, a hundred kilometers of skytrain and subway lines (with the construction of another hundred kilometers underway). The city has earned itself a reputation as an Alpha Global City and one of the most dynamic cities in the world.

In Thailand, the majority of the population makes its living through agriculture and livestock farming so the markets genuinely become the centers of local activities and one of the most important civic features of Thai life. Due to the markets’ role as the city food pantry and the centers of many communities, Thai markets generally appear to be the biggest infrastructural buildings in any district besides temples or governmental office buildings.

The term “Alpha Global City” is defined by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network. A global city (also called world city, alpha city or world center) is a city deemed to be an important node in the global economic system.

The data obtained from Nation Statistical Office shows that more than 60 percent of residents in Bangkok who don’t receive college education earn less than USD 4,500 annually.
In the past, the Thai markets in Bangkok traditionally operated as the equivalents of cultural centers, community centers or public plazas and squares in Western countries. People might have gathered in other public places to discuss politics, exchange news, celebrate, and socialize. However, in Thai culture only the markets could hold so many programs under one roof. The Thai markets were informally a civic institution where people in the community came to exchange their knowledge of culinary arts, local history, and community news. They were also prime places to learn the history of any community it belonged to as local elders and wise men informally gathered at market streets and coffee houses to exchange their wisdom, tradition, and news. Unfortunately, these community precedents of cultural exchange between the public have become rare things to find in modern Bangkok.

Thai markets acutely rely on public infrastructure such as roads, streets, river, and klong (canals) for the delivery of goods, supplies and public access. Particularly in Bangkok, canals are as important as streets and roads for Thai markets to function successfully. Thus, Thai markets are comprehensively integrated with the urban fabric and both entities evolve simultaneously.

Thai markets originally took form on the open ground at the heart of the village and were sporadically set up on the common ground in a temple area. The independent merchants customarily set up their space on the ground to sell goods to the public in the early morning for a few hours, then the same open ground would have turned into multi-purpose space for the other public uses. The Thai markets' central location and multi-purpose ground made it a frequent site for public celebrations such as parades for Thai wedding, processions on significant religious holidays, and other cultural pageantry.

Since World War II, Bangkok has advanced economically and socially due to the preceding infrastructural upgrades. New public markets and prime city centers were coming up along the newly constructed boulevards and roads. From these changes, Bangkok city planning, architecture, and communities have consequentially thrived. New technology in architectural construction, industrial production, as well as new marketing techniques also significantly modernized the Thai markets. The modernization in Thai markets were largely the result of in the improvement of public order, hygiene, and physical conditions of the markets.
Fig. 1 Historical precedent of the Thai market in the early time of Bangkok, Thailand - flickr.com

Fig. 2 Historical precedent of a floating market in the early time of Bangkok, Thailand - Thai Encyclopedia for Teenager

Fig. 3 Modern Thai market, Thai Chuay Thai, 1980s - http://www.soidb.com/th/bangkok/shop/market/thai_chuai_thai_market.html

Fig. 4 Modern Thai market precedent, Talaad Thai Airways - http://www.soidb.com/th/bangkok/shop/market/thai_airways_market.html

Fig. 5 Modern Thai market, Talaad Samyaan, 2008 - http://www.manager.co.th/Travel/ViewNews.aspx?NewsID=9510000067908

Fig. 6 Modern Thai market, Talaad O Thor Kor, 1980s - by author
Gradually, Thai markets have been architecturalized and transformed from an open ground of casual congregation to a big shed with a formal operational schedule to protect the market space from ever-changing weather. In the late 1970’s, the Western architectural style of a market-house was widely embraced and adapted to the Thai markets. The new market typology featured a long, narrow, and open sided room so that the merchants and people might have both space and natural light. The large, light open space of exposition halls, train stations, and other nineteenth-century building types were also widely adapted for market halls by fostering a corridor-like atmosphere that encouraged shoppers to stroll and inspect the goods. Nonetheless, the drawback from adopting the conditioned interior space into the Thai market architecture was the deprivation of the dynamic open space which was resilient so that the other public programs could take place.

This thesis asserts that the current form of the proliferating modernization of the Thai markets in terms of economic growth and the incorporation of building technology to improve goods storage, attractive envelope, and shopping environment, is actually neither modern nor sustainable for the Thai culture’s scio-economic.

Despite Thai Markets’ claims to architectural modernization over time, those markets remain as static, inarticulate, massive sheds that are used for just a few hours a day, emptying out when the urban life and pulse idles. The vacant condition of the Thai markets have become problematic culturally and architecturally. After the markets are closed, they create a blind spot in the urban fabric where crimes, offensive acts and soliciting are fostered. As public architecture, the vacant condition of the Thai markets has miserably failed to meet expectations and historical precedents as a community space, an open ground for social interactions, and a place for urban collective expression.

One might believe that the fact that Thai markets are only used at certain times during the day is merely a reflection of a metropolitan tempo that relates to the nature of buying and selling food which typically occurs only a few hours a day. My thesis argues that the temporally underutilized space and declining state of the market is in fact an

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8 From table 28 page 473, 2007 Crime Survey Data Appendix B, www.thaicvs.org. In Thailand, 2007. There were 2,941 crimes committed in the city area close to gas stations, convenient stores, and public markets. From table 27 page 461, most crimes are committed during 12.00pm - 3.00pm (12.3 percent) and between 9.00pm - 3.00am (29.2 percent)
architectural problem that need to be resolved spatially and programmatically. Spatially, the current architectural model of Thai markets is not adaptive or fluid enough to allow for changes in use at different times of the day. This spatial inflexibility has become problematic in the programmatic diversification of Thai markets.

Manager Daily Newspaper and Post Today Daily News on the article: A Near Extinction of Thai Public Market on June 7th, 2004 reported that hundreds of Thai markets has closed since 1970 and Thai markets have lost over 50 percent of its customers to modern hypermarkets since the 1980. These reports of the declining state of Thai Markets exhibit the failures of the current architectural model of the markets, which avow to be modern yet are not sustainable nor competent. This infamous phenomenon, where Thai markets can become an undesirable place at times and seen as dispensable, has dampened the vibrancy of the community space and suggested a sense of cultural decay in Bangkok.9

Bangkok is currently home to over 10 million Thai citizens and hundreds of thousands of foreign immigrants of which 6.3 million live in the city center which has a growth rate of 0.6 percent per year.10 Bangkok recently reached a population density of 5,801 people per sq.km., which continues to rise. To serve the increasing urban population and the majority of lower income residents, Thai markets need to be modernized beyond theur physical appearance and fundamentally reformed from the bottom up. The new paradigm of Thai markets will deliberately have to engage the challenges of preserving cultural essence and creating identity of place. Public markets have to maintain a consistent, fundamental function as a civic center where people gather to discuss politics, exchange news, celebrate, and socialize.

This thesis proposes that a new breed of architecture for Thai markets is conceivable and necessary in order for them to survive while nurturing the rich urban goods distribution, consumption, and dynamic urban spectacles.

The challenge is that, instead of the rigid architectural approaches to modern market architecture, can we approach the new typology for Thai markets as a resilient form of architecture that provides active, adaptable urban spaces where the markets and rich temporal urban programs are diversified and temporally animated? Can flexibility in Thai markets be reinvented for Thai scio-economic sustainability and a place for collective urban expressions?

9 From Manager Daily Newspaper and Post Today Daily News on the article: A Near Extinction of Thai Public Market on June 7th, 2004 reported that hundreds of Thai markets has closed since 1970 and Thai markets have lost over 50 percent of its customers to modern hypermarkets. Currently, Thai markets have faced the crisis of closing down due to the modern trading competitions such as Big C supermarket, United Kingdom Tesco Lotus superstores, and Carrefour Group supermarkets.

10 From the data provided by the College of Human Sciences, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand. Bangkok has a registered population of 5,702,595. However, including unregistered residents according to The Ministry of Interior, the population in Bangkok Metropolitan Area can be as much as 10,100,964 people. Bangkok Business News reported on December 7th, 2006 that Thailand population is growing at the rate of 0.6 percent per year
BACKGROUND RESEARCH & ASSESSMENTS
Establishment of Bangkok - The beginning of the Rattanakosin Era. Floating Markets, Thai Markets, and Street Markets were already present from the Ayuthaya and Sukhothai eras.

Buddha Yodfa Chulalok the Great (Rama I)
Buddha Loetla Nabhalai (Rama II)
Jessadabodindra (Rama III)
Mongkut (Rama IV)

Infrastructural upgrading in the city

Buddha Yodfa Chulalok the Great (Rama I)
Buddha Loetla Nabhalai (Rama II)
Jessadabodindra (Rama III)
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Establishment of Bangkok - The beginning of the Rattanakosin Era.

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Jessadabodindra (Rama III)
Mongkut (Rama IV)

1868 Bangkok Mass Transit Authority was founded

1907 Bangkok Rail Way was founded

1916 The Bangkok City Center moved and expanded eastward due to intensive infrastructural upgrading

1941 Bangkok city centers were formed to become several districts

1947 Due to the economic depression after WWII, farmers in suburban areas gave up their lands to find jobs in the city
Total population in Bangkok increased from 750,000 in 1950 to 1.2 M due to 37,800 rural migrants that entered Bangkok annually.

A survey showed that there were about 2,400 street vendors at this time.

The first shopping mall in Bangkok, Siam Center, was built.

The first supermarket in Bangkok, Foodland was built.

Following the success of Foodland, Villar Markets were built, in prime business areas in Bangkok.

The first hypermarket, Big C, was built.

Surveys showed that there were around 19,000 street vendors operating in the city.

Surveys showed that there were already around 250,000 street vendors in the city. Bangkok Economic Crisis; after the crash, street vendors has been joined with new breed of operations.

BTS Sky train opened.

Five global retailers (British Tesco, French Carrefour and Casino, Dutch Ahold and Makro, and Belgian Food Lion) invested 120 M USD in Thailand to launch their hyper markets.

Surveys showed that there were around 380,000 street vendors operating in the city.

Survey showed that 40% of the Thai markets have been closed down since 1970.

There are 287 designated sites for street markets and 407 unofficial sites.

Samyan Market was closed after 43 years of operation.

Talaad Ying Chareon Thai Market showing a 15% increase in market customers after the World Economy Meltdown in 2008.

Airport Link Sky train opens.

The food retail business is expected to grow by 30 to 40% a year.
1950
1957
1954 Total population in Bangkok increased from 750,000 in 1950 to 1.2 M due to 37,800 rural migrants that entered Bangkok annually.

A survey showed that there were about 2,400 street vendors at this time.

Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX)

1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
2010
2020
2030
2040
2050
2060
2070
2080
2090
2100

1972
1974
1987
1994
1993
1991
1992
1996
2003
2000
2004
2005
2002
2010
2008

The first shopping mall in Bangkok, Siam Center, was built. The first supermarket in Bangkok, Foodland was built.

Following the success of Foodland, Villar Markets were built, in prime business areas in Bangkok.

The Bangkok Expressway was founded. The government attempted to encourage self-employment in the Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan.

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Street vendors were seen as a threat to Bangkok's orderliness. The city has limited the increase of the street vendors.

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The Airport Link Skytrain opens.

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Survey showed that 40% of the Thai markets have been closed down since 1970.

There were 39 department stores, 750 shopping centers, 40 department stores, and 82 hypermarkets in the city. Surveys showed that Thai markets had lost 50% of their customers to modern supermarkets.

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MARKET VS STREET

Can the hybrid paradigm maintain the socio-economic aspects of the Thai markets and the dynamic transformation of the streets in Bangkok?

Can streets alone serve as civic platforms for both the Thai marketplace and public space for various urban spectacles?

HYBRIDIZE THE TWO SYSTEMS
The focal investigation of my thesis lies in understanding how the socio-economic dynamic and the urban spectacles in Thai markets and streets work. These are two extremely different entities – one appears as a solid, rigid, architectural being while the other is considered a void, resilient space.

Can these two very different architectural species be hybridized into a new architectural typology for Thai markets?

In summary, this thesis will inquire into the possibilities of hybridizing the two typologies into a new paradigm for Thai markets that is rather ephemeral, a new multi-functional architecture for market vending and urban activities, resulting from the braids of two distinctive building species. This place will become a new civic building type to assemble the public around their common needs for commodities, leisure, and interaction.
Fig. 7 Modern Thai market, Talaad Or Thor Kor, 2008 - Author
Thai Markets: A Brief History, Components and How they work

City dwellers have always depended on outside sources for food production and supply. For centuries, towns and cities have been shaped by and around the hustle and bustle of buying and selling activities. At the center of this trading activity is the Public Market – one of the oldest kinds of urban infrastructure which is often as old as the cities in which the markets are located.

In Southeast Asia, even through the present, the majority of people in any country makes its living through agriculture and livestock farming. Most people live where they work and bring their produce to informal markets held on the grounds of their temple or in the center of the town. Public markets grew up as centers of local activity and were an important feature of rural life.

Early in Thai history, Talad (the Thai markets) in Bangkok had two general forms in general: “Talad Bok” (Fresh Markets) and “Talad Nam” (Floating Markets). Talad Bok were markets where independent merchants could sell their products to the public, usually located on an open ground at the heart of the village. Merchants sporadically set up their vending spaces or simply laid out goods on the tables on the common ground in a temple area.

On the other hand, Talad Nam were markets which took shape through an assembly of merchant row boats. The rowing vendors or merchants would have travelled along the rivers, canals, and subordinate waterways to sell their fresh produce and goods. Some merchants would have used a raft to set their floating retail along the canal side. In the old times of Bangkok, Thai markets defined many of the districts in the city and those areas are still recognized as the market districts through the present.

In 1916, during the time of King Rama VI, the public infrastructural system in Bangkok was largely upgraded using Western modern building construction methods. The government of Thailand set up regulations for newly constructed buildings along new constructed roads and streets. Reinforced concrete with molding details on facades was a common construction method widely used in the metropolitan area.

The architecture of Thai markets also adopted the western style of a market-house that was long, narrow, and open on its
sides so that the merchants and people might have both room and natural light. The large, light open space of exposition halls, train stations, and other nineteenth-century building types had also become the precedents for market halls by fostering a street-like atmosphere that encouraged shoppers to stroll by and inspect goods.

Presently, the Thai markets in Bangkok are typically composed of a market hall, commercial townhouses, and open lots for street vendors. The streets in Thai markets complex as are provided for bringing the service and public access to the markets. The vendor stalls form an interior grid system for circulation. The main market hall takes up approximately 40% of the site, while the commercial buildings and streets take 45% and 15% respectively. The main market hall is fully used for only a few hours in the morning while the surrounding commercial buildings are open 6-8 hours daily depending on the popularity of the market.
The Thai Markets

The Thai market envelopes normally appear as big sheds which are used only for a few hours, otherwise void of life.

The stall layout in the Thai market is a conventional grid system of internal streets. Because most of the produce in a Thai market are prepared food and fresh produce, people only come to the market in the morning to get produce from vendors while they are fresh.

The Thai market envelopes normally appear as big sheds which are used only for a few hours, otherwise void of life.
Fig. 9 Silom road. The Songkran festival, the traditional New Year’s Day from 13 to 15 April. The Silom road is annually transformed into an urban space for public celebration and market space.
The Streets of Bangkok: Brief History, Components and How They Work

Streets are defined in an elemental way as a) a constitution of the outside b) a vectorization to bring people from one place to the other and c) a negative space of the buildings or void after the buildings occupy a site.

Base on the width, scale and traffic capacity, street typologies in Bangkok can be largely classified into 3 categories: Boulevard, Street, and Alleyway.

Generally, The streets in Bangkok normally serve the public beyond their basic infrastructural functions. Because of their unique atmosphere of freedom and frankness, streets bring activity and energy to the city, attracting human interaction in a public space.

Streets foster diverse human connections that are similar to those found in the temples or civic institutions. At times, the street can be a place to be alone or to be with the public, a place to accidentally meet people or to observe other people, and a place to make political statements or to exchange political views.

More often, streets attract people from all walks of life for commodity exchange and trading. It is common to see the streets periodically transformed into marketplaces, or so-called street markets. The innumerable cultural appeals between sellers and buyers making an effort to settle their differences at the street markets are one of the most alluring spectacles in the streets of Bangkok.

Street markets are flexible and expand from the sidewalk to the street depending on the vehicular traffic management. The flexible nature of the street allows different kinds of markets to happen at different times of the day. The time-sharing, simple settings, and low starting cost of vending space in the street markets make them more sustainable in the Thai economy than the common Thai markets. Basically, the vendors bring their own set up inventories such as vending carts, tables and chairs for exhibiting the goods.

The street markets’ temporal activities and spatial articulation profoundly depend on the width of the street, the allowable zone on the sidewalks/streets for the market, and most importantly, the policy of those streets.

Fig. 10 Diagrams of the streets and urban spectacles in Bangkok - by author
Khaosan Road Markets, Bangkok, Thailand

8PM-5AM - EXTENSIVE SET UP

Flexible area for market setting on street and side walk 8PM-5AM

Flexible area for market setting on street and side walk 8AM-7PM

8PM-5AM - EXTENSIVE SET UP

Flexible area for market setting

8AM-7PM - PARTIAL SET UP

Storefront

Flexible area for market setting

8AM-7PM - PARTIAL SET UP

TEMPORAL SET UP OF THE STREET MARKET

Fig. 11 Diagrams of the street market temporal activities and spatial articulation - by author
100% MARKET OCCUPATION ON THE STREET

50% MARKET OCCUPATION ON THE STREET

15% MARKET OCCUPATION ON THE STREET

TYPICAL LAYOUT & COMPONENTS

STREET MARKET TEMPORAL USE

5 minutes setting 10 minutes setting 15 minutes setting

TIME SHARING = TIME SHARE = CHEAPER RENT

INVESTMENT AND BASIC INVENTORIES

SETTING UP THE STREET MARKET

SERVICING THE STREET MARKET

The Street Markets - Market Streets of Bangkok

Fig. 12 Diagrams of the modern Thai markets - by author
CONTINUOUS FLOW / SUPERIMPOSITION OF URBAN PROGRAMS
My architectural proposal positions itself as a cross-breed between a building and the streets; the inside and outside; the architecture and the urban landscape.

The selected precedents help me to inquire into the possibilities of hybridizing Thai markets and street typologies into a new paradigm for Thai markets that sporadically become the platform for temporal urban activities and spectacles, of which various kinds of markets can manifest round the clock.

The first part comes from my field research on Thai Street Markets which mainly focuses on the scale of the streets and the dimensions of the temporal vending space, the adjacency of the programs, and the street components.

The second part will look at three projects by Office for Metropolitan Architect. These precedents represent architectural schemes which break away from earlier static concepts of building typology such as a library or museum which are traditionally presented as stacked-up plates in a case which I find highly similar to the challenges of Thai markets. These projects share the same interests as my thesis on how to create a network of boulevards, how to create a vertical continuous flow, and how to create dynamic uses of space in the building.
The Street Markets of Bangkok

- **Soi Nana** - fashion
- **Sapaan Putr** - fashion, food
- **Tanom Khao San** - fashion, food, night life
- **Soi Sam Peng** - fashion, antiques
- **Paak Klong Market** - flowers, foods, vegetables, fruits
- **Rajchavitee Market** - fashion
- **Sapaan Putr** - fashion, food
- **Rajchavitee Market** - fashion
- **Soi Ton Son** - food, fruit, vegetables
The Street Markets: Scales, Dimensions, Components

Peak hours 9.00pm-9.00am

Peak hours 9.00pm-2.00am

Evening

Evening

Afternoon

Paak Klong Talaad

Sapaan Putr Street Market

01 BOULEVARD 15-20 meter wide
Peak hours 4.00pm-3.00am

Peak hours 9.00am-9.00pm

Evening

Weekend

Afternoon

Weekday

Thanon Khao Saan Street

Chatuchak Weekend Market

02 STREET 9-15 meter wide
Peak hours 11.00am-3.00pm

Peak hours 3.00pm-7.00pm

Boulevard scale

Evening

Street scale

Afternoon

Morning

Soi Sampeng

Soi Tonson

03 ALLEY 4-6 meter wide
STREETS AS SPECTIAL ORGANIZERS

SUPERIMPOSITION OF URBAN PROGRAMS

DYNAMIC USES OF SPACE

MANIPULATED PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC VECTORS

INTERNAL BOULEVARDS, CONTINUOUS FLOW

WRAPPED BOULEVARDS
Jussieu Library
OMA, France, Paris, 1992

CRISSCROSSING STREET II
Kunsthal
OMA, Netherlands, Rotterdam, 1992

AYERING STREETS
Parc de La Villette
OMA, France, Paris, 1982

REINVENTING FLEXIBILITY

Fig. 13 Conceptual diagram of Parc de La Villette by OMA

Fig. 14 Parc de La Villette plan by OMA
Three projects by the Office of Metropolitan Architects: Continuous Flows

Parc de La Villette
Paris, France, 1982

In this competition, Oma was dealing with the amount of the programs provided by the city which was too large for the given site. To combine programmatic instabilities with architectural specificity, Oma’s competition entry for Parc de La Villette proposed layers of horizontal open streets throughout the north-south length of the park. Some fixed stable facilities such as kiosks, playgrounds, and barbecue spots were distributed mathematically according to different point grids. The superimpositions of unstable programs were placed on the bands of streets, providing a rapid change in experience across the park.
Jussieu Library
Paris, France, 1992

Oma introduces “a social magic carpet” which is pliable and functions as a vertical, intensified landscape. The social magic carpet is presented as a city: the specific elements of the libraries are re-implanted in the new public realm like buildings in a city. Instead of a simple stacking of one floor on top of the other, sections of each floor are manipulated to connect with those above and below.

In this way, Oma produces a single trajectory that travels across the entire structure like a warped interior boulevard. Through its scale and variety, the effect of the inhabited planes becomes almost that of a street. Through this scheme, Oma produced a manipulation of a static spatial structure and a dynamic movement to create a continuous vertical flow.

Kunsthal
Rotterdam, Natherlands, 1992

The Kunsthal features sloping floor planes and a series of tightly organized ramps. The sloping planes and ramps provide seamless connections between the exhibition halls, galleries, and green space. The building was conceived as a square crossed by two routes: a road running east to west and a public access route running on the north/south axist of the Museum Park.

With the challenge of the crossing routes dividing the building into four parts, Oma’s proposal for Kunsthal is providing crisscrossing, spiral streets within the building. These crisscrossing internal streets provide a continuous circuit within the building.
Fig. 17 Jussieu Library model by OMA

Fig. 18 Jussieu Library concept paper model by OMA
Fig. 19 Kunsthal exploded axon by OMA
Fig. 20 Kunsthal section by OMA
From the design precedents, the thesis concept will be generated from the premise of accommodating the flow of people and the manipulation of the streets of Bangkok.

The thesis has to recognize the dynamic aspect of people circulating and how to integrate the building with existing surrounding street fabric and how it can become a gateway to the city. I want to channel the idea of manipulated boulevards which will provide the flow of vertical movement within the market.

The thesis will adopt the interpretation and planning of real streets in Bangkok as a way to justify the project and superimpose urban programs such as plazas, parks, monumental staircases, cafés, and shops on the proposed street network.
THE PROJECT:
SITE & PROGRAMS
Chaopraya River

Early Bangkok “Life Line”

The Old Capital City - 1782 - 1851

69 yrs

Modern Capital City - 1851 until now

159 yrs

Bangkok metropolitan area as of today. The city of Bangkok expand greatly to the east side in 1851 due to new road constructions: Chareon Krung, Banrung Meung, Feng Nakom and Silom, and existing canals expansion.
SITE AND CITY CONTEXT: PAAK KLONG TALAD

Paak Klong Talad Market is one of the oldest markets in Bangkok. The market is located just southeast of the old city (Koh Rattana Kosin). This thesis focuses on the market site next to the Chaopraya river which is the city life line, posing a challenge of integrating two public piers on both the west and east ends of the site and increasing public access to the water.

It is a Thai custom to put landmark buildings along the Chaopraya river. The landmarks in this area of the market include the Memorial Bridge on the east edge of the site; across from the river are Wat Prayoon, Sata Cruz Church, Wat Kalayanamitr, and Wat Arun and further up the river are Wat Po and the Royal Palace.

From the context of the city, the thesis is challenging the idea of becoming a conciliator between the divisions of the old and the new city, the water and the ground, and the network of public transportation. Essentially, the proposed building not only has to be modern but also monumental.
Fig. 21 Site in the context of canal system in Bangkok, as seen from the Klong Meung Derm Canal

Fig. 21 Site in the context of the Chaopraya river waterfront, as seen from the Memmorial Bridge
Fig. 22 Site in the context of the city, as seen from Chakpetr street
500 m radius
7 minutes walking distance

FANNUIL HALL BOSTON

COMMONWEALTH AVE MALL

PAAK KLONG TALAAD

SITE AND SCALE COMPARISON 1 : 3,000

0 100 m 200 m
MARKET WILL BE A ZIPPER BETWEEN THE NODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
MARKET WILL BE A ZIPPER BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE WATER
MARKET WILL BE A ZIPPER BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW CITY
The market will be a part of the architectural monuments along the river.
Site: Paak Klong Talad Market

The Thai Market Programs

The Thai Market Remixed

The Multiplied Streets as the Resilient Civic Platform for Markets and Urban Programs
PROGRAMATIC REMIX: REINVENTING FLEXIBILITY

Can flexibility in Thai markets be reinvented for Thai socio-economic sustainability and a place for collective urban expressions?
Service, Main Circulation Artery & Street Market

MAIN BOULEVARD SCALE 16-18 m wide

Secondary Circulation Artery & Street market

Tertiary Circulation, Short cut & Street market

STREET SCALE 10 -14 m wide

ALLEY SCALE 3-6 m wide

PROPOSED STREET TYPOLOGIES AND WIDTH IN THE PROJECT
EXAMPLE OF STREET MARKET MANAGEMENT 1:300

BOULEVARD

STREET

ALLEY
**Gradient Constrains for Vehicles**

- FLAT 0%
- 1%
- 8%

*Comfortable for walking / modern driveway gradients are now 8% or lower*

- 10%
- 12%
- 15%

*Suitable for loading area and driving ramps for multiple storeys parking structure*

- FLAT 0%
- 1%
- 2%
- 3%
- 4%
- 5%
- 6%
- 7%
- 8%

*Minimum gradient for surface drain / slope for wheelchair users*

- 10%
- 12%
- 15%

*Not suitable for walking when raining / suitable for loading area and driving ramps for multiple storeys parking structure*

**Gradient Constrains for Pedestrians**

- Flat
- 180 degree turning with slope
- Alternative turning with slope

*Most comfortable walking slopes / considered walking ramps*

- Public access along the street on one side
- Extended urban space

*Space under the street suggest the potential of the other market and urban programs*

- Pocket urban space embedded along the street on two sides

*Embedded programs under the elevated street are sliced to create urban passages*

- 2 Streets turning in angles

*Urban Passages*

**Turnings and Intersections 1:100**

**Occupation Under the Elevated Streets 1:100**

**Proposing a Vertical Continuous Flow**
POTENTIAL OF THE EMBEDDED PROGRAMS UNDER AND WITHIN THE FOLDED STREETS

- Open space
- Civic programs
- Retails
- Changing elevation: Elevators core and stairs well

POTENTIAL OF THE EMBEDDED PROGRAMS UNDER AND WITHIN THE FOLDED STREETS
01 INCREASING WATERFRONT

02 NEGOCIATING SITE LINES

20m → The maximum width of the proposed street dimension

03 TRIPLE THE MARKET STREET SURFACE

04 CALIBRATING THE STREETS SIZES

05 RESIDUAL SPACE PROVIDES PASSAGES FOR LIGHT AND AIR

06 UTILIZING THE SPACE UNDER THE STREET NETWORK

SITE AND FORMAL STRATEGIES 1 : 3,000
DETAIL A - The residual space between the main street network can be used for service alley, access to waterfront, openspace and reflecting pools.

DETAIL B - The space underneath the folding streets can be used for retails, civic or public open space.
PROGRAMS

Sky street

Main street

Covered market / retails / civic programs

Alleyway

Working space / production

Market service road

Waterfront way

Ferry station

Sky parkway

Reflecting pool

Public direct access to the waterfront

Service ramp access
ELEVATOR CORES / URBAN OBSERVATION TOWER

- Observation Level +18
- Sky Streets Level +8.0
- Ground Level 0.0
- Production Level -4.0
NORTH ELEVATION FROM CHAK PET ROAD

SOUTH ELEVATION FROM THE RIVER

SEE DETAIL ELEVATION-R1

SEE DETAIL ELEVATION-C1

SEE DETAIL ELEVATION-C1

SEE DETAIL ELEVATION-C2

SEE DETAIL ELEVATION-C2
SOUTH ELEVATION FROM THE RIVER

DETAIL ELEVATION R-1

DETAIL ELEVATION R-2

SOUTH ELEVATION FROM THE RIVER

0  5  10  20m
Main street detail plan

SEE DETAIL PLAN-1

SEE DETAIL PLAN-2

SEE DETAIL PLAN-3

SEE DETAIL PLAN-4

SEE DETAIL PLANS A

DETAIL PLAN-1

DETAIL SECTION B
DETAIL PLAN-A Temporal programatic uses of the Market main street
### C - Street markets

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### D - Various urban programs

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DETAIL SECTION-A Temporal programatic uses of the Market main street

A - Servicing the markets
B - Truck markets
C - Street markets
D - Various urban programs
DETAIL SECTION-B MARKET MAIN STREET SECTION
PLAN

A - Servicing the markets
C - Street markets
D - Various urban programs
E - Leisure street

Daily
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Weekends
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A - Servicing the markets
B - Leisure street
C - Street markets
D - Various urban programs
E - Various urban programs

Daily

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Public holidays

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101
DETAIL B
SKY STREET SECTION

WALKWAY  MARKET / URBAN ACTIVITIES ZONE  BENCH / WALL

2 M  8-10 M  2 M

HEIGHT AND GROUND CONDITION VARIES, SEE PLAN

DETAIL C
ALLEY SECTION

BENCH  MARKET / URBAN ACTIVITIES ZONE

2 M  4-6 M
DETAIL B-2
SKY STREET WITH MULTIPURPOSED SPACE UNDERNEATH SECTION
TYPICAL DETAIL
FACADE ELEVATION

MATERIAL LEGEND

A VERTICAL RAILING TUBE AT 1 M CENTER TO CENTER WITH STEEL MESH PANELS ON THE OUTSIDE EDGE
B STEEL MESH PANEL
C VERTICAL FINS
D HORIZONTAL GLASS SHUTTER
E SHELF UNITS FOR DISPLAY
Can we approach the new typology for the Thai markets as a resilient form of architecture that provides active, adaptable urban spaces where the markets and rich temporal urban programs are diversified and temporally animated?
RETAIL MARKETS
10AM-6AM

ART FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL
8AM-4PM

STREET FAIR
NIGHT MARKETS
8PM-3AM

WEEKEND MARKETS
6PM-6AM

BANGKOK FASHION WEEK
4PM-1AM (AFTER PARTY TILL 5AM)
ALLEY MARKETS
10AM-8AM

SKY MARKETS
STREET MARKETS
MORNING ALMS GIVING TO THE MONKS

24 HRS
4AM-7AM
From the beginning, this project has been a challenge and I hope to have done some justice to what I see as an important question regarding the architectural issues of Thai markets in Bangkok which has much to do with Thai socioeconomics and lifestyle.

Thai markets persist as the principal place where society can evaluate its success or failure at organizing urban life. The dynamic process by which markets were relocated, demolished, rebuilt, adapted, and reused directly reflected the active, yet unsustainable presence of the Thai social-economy. An ideal public market should be an urban microcosm, a city itself in miniature.

As a place of civic pride, modern Thai markets should remain the focal point of neighborhoods or communities; public markets should foster direct contact between people, both producer and customers.

Periodically, to be Modern in Thai culture sometimes mean to “be more” or “look more” like Western style, even though it might not at all suit Thai socioeconomics or lifestyle. This foolish style of imitation is also seen in architectural approaches and the Thai market is not an exception. For this project, I hope it will offer an alternative of a new “Thai modern” that is not a merely stylish or modern-looking building without any profound thoughts and process in the architectural making.

This thesis also attempts to offer another path for the Thai market to survive the current collision of the moral economy and manifestations of a capitalist market economy in Thailand and so it may be reborn again as a new breed of monumental civic architecture in Bangkok.


Kostof, Spiro. The City Assembled: The Elements of Urban Form through History


Bangkok : Thai Junior Encyclopedia Project, 2002


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Spitzer, Theodore. Public Markets and Community Revitalization. USA : ULI-the Urban Land Institute and Project for Public Spaces, Inc. 1995


ABSTRACT

This thesis asserts that the current form of the proliferating modernization of Thai markets in terms of economic growth and the incorporation of building technology to improve goods storage, attractive envelope, and shopping environment, is actually neither modern nor sustainable for the Thai socio-economic system.

Despite fact that Thai Markets have claimed to be modernized over time, they are merely heavily populated for a few hours each day, and otherwise remain barren. Recent reports of the declining state of the Markets also exhibit the failures of the current model of Thai markets, which avow to be modern yet are not sustainable nor competent, creating bigger crisis in Thai urban culture. My thesis argues that the temporal condition of underutilized space and the declining state of Thai markets are in fact architectural problems that need to be resolved spatially and programmatically. This thesis proposes that a new breed of architecture for Thai markets is conceivable and necessary in order for Thai markets to survive while nurturing the rich urban goods distribution, consumption, and dynamic urban spectacles.

This thesis will investigate the possibilities of a new paradigm for Thai markets in Bangkok by hybridization between the Thai markets and street markets to create a model that is rather an ephemeral form of architecture, a new multi-functional space for market vending and urban activities, resulting from the braids of streets networks.

This place will become a new civic building type --- which is a cross-breed between street and architecture, landscape and buildings --- to assemble the public around their common needs for commodities, leisure, and interaction.